

Blanche Lincoln

U.S. Senator for Arkansas

Delivering for Rural Arkansas



Summer 2010

Dear Fellow Arkansan,

As a farmer's daughter growing up in Helena, I learned from an early age about the sacrifices, hard work and contributions of Arkansas's farm families.

Agriculture is the backbone of Arkansas's economy, creating more than 270,000 jobs in the state and providing \$9.1 billion in wages and salaries. In total, agriculture contributes roughly \$15.9 billion to the Arkansas economy each year and is responsible for one out of every four Arkansas jobs.

We are the nation's largest producer of rice, the second largest producer of cotton, and are ranked 21st or higher for the production of 19 different commodities. We also produce much of the nation's livestock products, rank second in chicken production and third in catfish production.

That's why I am proud to be the first Arkansan ever to serve as Chairman of the Senate Agriculture Committee in the committee's 184-year history.

This chairmanship is a huge victory for Arkansas. Now that an Arkansan is holding the gavel in the Senate Agriculture Committee, the policies that affect our state will be written by someone who is committed to doing what's best for Arkansas and for our way of life.

Since I took over the gavel of the Agriculture Committee in September 2009, I have:

- Written and passed a truly historic child nutrition bill that includes the largest increase in funding for school lunch programs since their inception and provides Arkansas's children with more nutritious school meals.
- Helped Arkansas's communities secure much-needed rural economic development assistance for broadband and other critical services.
- Written the toughest Wall Street reform bill to crack down on risky financial deals, protecting Arkansans' retirement funds, savings accounts and college funds.

In addition to these achievements, as Chairman of the Senate Agriculture Committee I am poised to deliver much-needed agriculture disaster assistance for Arkansas's producers who were devastated by rains and floods. These achievements help all Arkansans – not just farmers. As Chairman of the Agriculture Committee, I will continue to be a strong advocate for supporting the thousands of jobs and hundreds of rural small businesses in our state.

With Arkansas Pride,

Blanche Lincoln
U.S. Senator



Senator Lincoln visits the Wolf Pen Gap ATV area on the Ouachita National Forest.

WHAT'S INSIDE

- SENATOR LINCOLN USES AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE CHAIRMANSHIP TO DELIVER FOR ARKANSAS
- SENATE PASSES LINCOLN'S HISTORIC CHILD NUTRITION LEGISLATION
- LINCOLN'S TOUGH WALL STREET REFORMS BECOME LAW

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NEW IN 2010

Lincoln's Historic Child Nutrition Legislation Passes Senate

One out of every four Arkansas children are living in hunger and one of every five Arkansas children are considered obese.

Chairman Lincoln led her Senate colleagues to successful passage of the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act, which would reauthorize federal child nutrition programs. The **fully paid-for** legislation, which **passed the Senate unanimously**, comes at a crucial moment, as child nutrition programs are set to expire September 30, 2010. The legislation makes the **largest investment in child nutrition programs** since their inception, setting nutritional standards that ensure schools are serving healthier meals.

New Lincoln Legislation

Lincoln's Tough Wall Street Reforms Become Law

Chairman Lincoln played a pivotal role in crafting the Wall Street Reform Act that became law in July 2010, authoring strong reforms as part of the overall package.

Senator Lincoln has used her Chairmanship to help shut down the casino-style banking that has destroyed the savings and futures of thousands of Arkansans. The complete lack of accountability and reckless behavior of Wall Street pushed 100,000 hardworking Arkansans out of jobs, devastated Arkansas's small businesses and brought the country to the brink of economic collapse. Chairman Lincoln knows that in order to get the economy back on track and put people back to work, the broken financial system that put so many families' economic security in jeopardy must be fixed.

- ★ **Schools would see an increase in the reimbursement rate for school meals for the first time since 1973 and, in turn, kids would get healthier meals.**
- ★ **Meals would have to meet strict nutritional guidelines set in coordination with the Institute of Medicine.**
- ★ **Foods in vending machines and in a la carte lines in schools would have to meet the same nutritional guidelines as meals served in the cafeteria.**



Chairman Lincoln visits the Arkansas School for the Deaf, which has successfully implemented the U.S. Department of Agriculture's fresh fruits and vegetables program.

Chairman Blanche Lincoln: Delivering for Arkansas

On September 9, 2009, U.S. Senator Blanche Lincoln became the first Arkansan to serve as Chairman of the Senate Agriculture Committee in the committee's 184-year history. With agriculture providing a job for one out of every four Arkansans and contributing more than \$15 billion each year to the state's economy, this chairmanship is a huge victory for Arkansas. Here are a few examples of how the Chairmanship impacts all Arkansans.

Protecting the Safety Net for Production Agriculture

Having grown up on a rice farm in Helena, Chairman Lincoln knows what it is like to endure the capital-intensive farm economy. She has fought against Washington special interests determined to change the face of agriculture in Arkansas. As Chairman of the Agriculture Committee, she



Chairman Lincoln delivers economic development training funds for Winrock International through the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Rural Community Development Initiative. From left to right: Tammye Trivino, USDA Administrator for Housing and Community Facilities; Annette Pagan, Director of U.S. Programs, Winrock International; Senator Blanche Lincoln.

alone is in a position to ensure Southern agriculture is respected in Washington.

Agriculture is Arkansas's largest economic sector. A strong safety net to help producers and rural communities when market prices fall is essential to continuing Arkansans' way of life. Last year the federal farm safety net pumped \$2.9 billion into the state's economy. Arkansas needs Chairman Lincoln writing the 2012 Farm Bill to ensure this safety net is protected. She has already held hearings to focus on maintaining a strong U.S. farm policy in the 2012 bill.

Strengthening the Rural Economy

Chairman Lincoln oversees the United States Department of Agriculture—the largest investor in our rural communities. USDA funding helps provide a variety of important services and infrastructure improvements to rural Arkansas – including fire trucks and emergency equipment, clean drinking water, hospital improvements, libraries, broadband services, and workforce development training. Most of Arkansas's rural communities would not have the resources to make these economic development investments without this funding.

- ★ In July, Chairman Lincoln delivered \$2.9 million in rural development funding to El Dorado to construct a new wastewater system to serve 440 area rural residents.
- ★ Additional water infrastructure announcements this year have included a \$2,837,000 grant to the Eureka Garden Public Facility Board in rural Pulaski County, and a \$1,497,000 grant to North Pulaski Waterworks in Jacksonville.
- ★ Chairman Lincoln has delivered rural development funds for the Piggott Library and the Ozark Heritage Center in Leslie.
- ★ In April, she announced Madison would receive \$185,000 to construct classrooms at the Madison Community Center for Youth and Senior Services, and Manila would receive \$115,000 to build a new municipal maintenance facility.
- ★ Since 2001, Senator Lincoln has delivered more than \$3.2 billion in rural economic development funding.
- ★ As Chairman, Senator Lincoln can now see that even more of these dollars flow to Arkansas's rural economy.

Protecting Arkansas's Forests and Timber Industry

Chairman Lincoln has fought to create policies that will keep Arkansas's critical logging, lumber and paper industries healthy. Within weeks of becoming Chairman, Senator Lincoln secured an extra \$4 million in timber funding for the Ouachita and Ozark National Forests – a 30 percent increase that will help keep sawmills in Russellville, Ola, Mansfield and Glenwood open and employing 700 Arkansans.

Promoting Conservation and Recreation Opportunities

As Chairman of the Senate Agriculture Committee, Senator Lincoln will write the 2012 Farm Bill-- the most important piece of legislation Congress considers when it comes to conserving land, restoring wildlife habitat and making a real difference in protecting our environment. Chairman Lincoln's work on the 2008 Farm Bill has already delivered more than \$100 million to Arkansas's conservation efforts.

Contact me

For assistance with agriculture issues or to learn more about **my** work delivering for rural Arkansas, visit www.lincoln.senate.gov or call **my** office at **501-375-2993**.

To stay informed on the latest issues and upcoming events, visit **my** online office at www.lincoln.senate.gov and sign up for **my** e-newsletter.



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